

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 7 November 2014 from the Secretary-General
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to refer to the visit by my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura, to South Sudan from 6 to 11 October 2014, in the framework of Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013).

In accordance with Security Council resolution 2106 (2013), which calls upon parties to armed conflict to make and implement specific and time-bound commitments to combat conflict-related sexual violence, my Special Representative and the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, signed the joint communiqué of South Sudan and the United Nations on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence.

Elements agreed upon in the joint communiqué include issuing and enforcing clear orders, through the military and police chains of command, prohibiting sexual violence; developing concrete action plans specific to the Sudan People's Liberation Army and the South Sudan National Police Service; fighting the impunity of perpetrators and ensuring the access of survivors to justice through reform and capacity-building in the justice sector; ensuring the provision of appropriate services for survivors of sexual violence; and speaking out publicly against conflict-related sexual violence.

The commitments expressed in the communiqué represent the key priorities for the United Nations for the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan. My Special Representative is grateful for having had the opportunity to brief the Council on 22 October 2014 on her visit and on the joint communiqué.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) **BAN** Ki-moon



Annex to the letter dated 7 November 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Joint communiqué of South Sudan and the United Nations on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict visited South Sudan from 6 to 11 October 2014, within the framework of Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013). The objective of the visit was to better understand the situation in South Sudan, particularly the trends and patterns of conflict-related sexual violence and the challenge of preventing and responding to such crimes, and to agree on concrete response measures with the Government.

During the visit, the Special Representative met with the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, and the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, as well as with the Ministers of Defence and Veterans' Affairs, Justice, Information and Broadcasting, the Interior, Health, and Gender, Child and Social Welfare. She also met with high-level representatives of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Inspector General of the South Sudan Police Service, as well as with the South Sudan National Human Rights Commission, the Speaker of Parliament and representatives of the diplomatic community, and consulted with the United Nations system as well as with representatives of civil society organizations, including women's groups, media organizations, youth groups, faith-based organizations, representatives of national and international non-governmental organizations and survivors of sexual violence.

The Special Representative takes note of the efforts being undertaken by the South Sudan authorities, including the strengthening of domestic legislation, efforts towards the ratification of key international human rights instruments and the strengthening of such institutions as the Human Rights Commission and the Law Review Commission. She is encouraged by the endorsement by South Sudan of the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, launched in the margins of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, in September 2013, and the prohibition of any acts of rape, sexual abuse and torture, under the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, signed on 23 January 2014.

The Special Representative also emphasized the membership of South Sudan in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region as an opportunity to implement the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children, adopted in 2006, and the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, adopted in 2011.

Notwithstanding the measures that have been taken, addressing conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan continues to be a challenge. The President affirmed the strong commitment of the Government of South Sudan to combat this crime, including addressing impunity for such crimes.

The South Sudan authorities reiterate the commitment of the Government to cooperate with the United Nations and other stakeholders to address the problem, including undertaking the following concrete measures:

- (a) Developing an action plan specific to SPLA, which will include the issuance of a clear order, through the chain of command, prohibiting sexual violence; the timely investigation of alleged violations; reinforcement of the military justice system to ensure accountability for sexual violence crimes; and training for military personnel;
- (b) Developing an action plan specific to the South Sudan National Police Service, which will include the provision of special police units with the capacity to investigate sexual violence crimes; training for police personnel; and the recruitment of more female police officers;
- (c) Ensuring and facilitating the monitoring of sexual violence in the framework of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and/or other ceasefire agreements, ensuring that sexual violence is reflected in specific provisions of any peace agreements, including those related to security arrangements and transitional justice mechanisms, and ensuring that perpetrators of sexual violence crimes are excluded from amnesty provisions;
- (d) Addressing sexual violence concerns in any security sector reform processes and arrangements, including through the provision of adequate training for all security sector personnel, encouraging the inclusion of more women in the security sector and instituting effective vetting processes to exclude from the security sector those responsible for acts of sexual violence;
- (e) Enhancing the justice system, including through strengthening the legal framework, bolstering the capacity of prosecutors and judges and improving access to justice for survivors of sexual violence;
- (f) Ensuring the provision of appropriate services for survivors of sexual violence, including medical, psychosocial, legal and other urgent needs, and encouraging and supporting the work of service providers;
- (g) Speaking out publicly against sexual violence at the highest level and in the strongest terms, and undertaking a national awareness-raising and prevention campaign on sexual violence, in collaboration with the United Nations.

The United Nations will continue to support the efforts of the Government of South Sudan to combat sexual violence. In this regard, the Special Representative is making available the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, which, in coordination with the United Nations system in South Sudan, will support the efforts of South Sudan to develop an implementation plan, in accordance with the priorities expressed by the present joint communiqué, and to mobilize assistance for its implementation.

The President will appoint a high-level focal point to lead and coordinate Government efforts, and will work with the Special Representative and the United Nations system to ensure the full implementation of the joint communiqué.

The international community and donors are encouraged to provide financial and technical support to the Government of South Sudan in order to enable the full implementation of the priorities set out in the present joint communiqué.